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SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/UMB, EUR/ERA AND EUR/AGS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [BO](#) [AU](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: PRE-GAERC DEMARCHE ON BELARUS: AUSTRIAN RESPONSE

REF: STATE 201513

Classified By: Pol Unit Chief Michael DeTar, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)  
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¶1. (C) PolOff delivered reftel demarche to Austrian MFA A/S for Eurasian Affairs Hans Porias on November 4, stressing that the U.S. hoped the EU would specifically call on Lukashenko not to run again. Porias told us that he believed that the Council Conclusions on Belarus were essentially finalized. However, there would be a detailed, substantive discussion of Belarus at the GAERC. Porias said that Belarus must "get the message that it must adhere to the standards it had signed up to." At a minimum, Belarus needed to invite ODIHR to monitor the election.

¶2. (C) In Porias' view, one of the problems in dealing with the Lukashenko regime was that many Belarusians do not perceive themselves as being badly off. To them, Belarus was "the last example of a successful Communist country." Reaching out to opinion elites in Belarus might be the most productive way to effect change in the country in the long term. In order that Belarus could have positive examples to emulate, the EU would invest substantial resources in its "European Neighborhood Policy," specifically targeting Ukraine and Moldova.

Phillips